(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, location-wise;

(c) the long term plan drawn up for expanding/ setting up of steel industry in remote and backward areas, State-wise, location-wise; and

(d) the impact of sharp reduction in import duties in 1996-97 on the production of stainless steel and alloy steel?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) to (c). According to the new industrial policy announced in July, 1991 "Iron & Steel Industry" has been removed from the list of industries reserved for the Public Sector and also exempted from the purview of compulsory licensing. No Industrial Licence is therefore required to set up Iron and Steel production/ processing facilities except for certain locational restrictions. Entrepreneurs are therefore free to set up such facilities anywhere in the country based on their commercial judgement. At present the Union Government do not propose to set up any new greenfield integrated steel producing unit in the country. However, the State Government of Orissa has proposed to set up an integrated steel plant under the name and style of Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd. in which some of the Central Public Sector undertakings have/proposed to have equity participation.

(d) Alongwith the reduction in peak import duties on stainless steel and alloy steel in the budget for 1996-97, import duty on stainless steel scrap, which is the basic raw material for manufacture of stainless steel products, has also been reduced from 20% advalorem to 10%, which is expected to benefit the alloy stainless steel industry.

Number of Passengers to Gulf Countries

1070. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the average number of passengers who travel to the Gulf countries from Trivandrum Air Port per month;

(b) whether any foreign Civil Aviation Companies came forward to undertake the services to the Gulf countries from Trivandrum Air Port;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the decision taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IMBRAHIM): (a) The average monthly traffic between Trivandrum and Gulf (including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) is of the order of 32,635 passengers.

(b) Requests have been received from designated airlines of Saudi Arabia and Qatar for operation of air services from Trivandurm airport. U.A.E. has also sought similar traffic right for Emirates Airline.

(c) and (d) In the absence of adequate quid-pro-quo to our national carriers and due to infrastructural constraints at the airport, there requests have not been agreed to so far.

[Translation]

Norms Fixed for Selection of Regional Programmes

1071. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA': Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria fixed for selection of regional programmes for telecast from Doordarshan Kendras;

(b) the number of proposals received in regard to Garhwal and Kumaon region of Uttar Pradesh during each of the last three years;

(c) the number of such programmes selected, and

(d) whether the Government propose to telecast more regional programmes of these areas?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Revival of Sick Industries

1072. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Trade Unions in West Bengal are preparing for a general strike on the revival of sick industries and opening of closed factories;

(b) if so, the action proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(c) if so, whether the Government have since opened any dialogue with the representatives of Trade Unions of the State?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Allotment of Wagons for Transportation of Foodgrains

1073. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received a representation from the Federation of the All India Foodgrain Dealers Association, Delhi, regarding restoration of the Quick Transit Service;